

A teacher educator's professional learning journey and border pedagogy: a meta-analysis of five research projects

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Abstract

Continuing learning is central to the professions of teaching and teacher education. Research that explores the nature of professional learning and the conditions that promote it is limited. In this paper I examine my own involvement and that of other teachers and teacher educators in five practice-based research studies in terms of our professional learning and border pedagogy. I played a key role in each project and offer an 'insider' perspective through 'autobiographical self-study'.

Each project involved crossing a border between professional knowledge contexts and explores the 'journey' metaphor of professional learning. The metaphors of passport and visa are used to explore the identities and purposes for the professional learning 'journey'. Further metaphors for ways of 'travelling' are used to interrogate the significance of identity and purpose in professional learning journeys that involve border-crossing. The benefits of border crossing for professional learning are then discussed.

Keywords: Metaphor, Practice-based research, Professional development, Professional knowledge, Self-study.

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Introduction

There is a generally acknowledged need for effective experiences that promote ‘life-long’ professional learning and development for teachers and teacher educators. The professional learning journey is a metaphor often used to describe the experiences of student teachers, teachers and teacher educators as they engage in professional learning and development. For example, student teachers usually begin their journey with pre-service teacher education and training, with associated school experience. This is followed by induction, with associated coaching and mentoring. Following their initial training and education, qualified teachers (and teacher educators) engage in activities that promote reflective practice, professional development, research and/or post-graduate study.

As part of such journeys the teacher and teacher educator cross real or virtual borders between education, professional learning and work contexts – be these schools, colleges, universities or other organizations. Teachers and teacher educators share ‘theory/practice’ stories about each other where ‘the university is a place of knowledge and reflection and the school is a place of action’ (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994, p. 89). They describe the territories of the teacher and teacher educator as ‘professional knowledge contexts constituted by professionally shared stories’ (1994, p. 89). They suggest that we seek to understand the ‘stories, myths, rituals and symbols’ (1994, p. 89) that are part of these often taken-for-granted and silent manifestations of professional knowledge contexts. The use of story or narrative is also suggested as a mechanism to theorize the intersections between education, learning and work (Saunders, 2006).

In the following section, I use an autobiographical narrative based on self-study to explore how I crossed borders between different professional knowledge contexts that provided opportunities to learn, as indeed does crossing any real border be it between countries or other contexts.

An autobiographical ‘self-study’ on professional learning journeys and border pedagogy

Introduction

Bullock and Christou (2009) suggest that self-study is a methodology that ‘provides a way for teacher educators to describe and interpret their pedagogies of teacher education. Extending the principles of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action established by Schön, (1983)’ They also argue that it often features rich descriptions of the problems that experienced teacher educators encounter in their practices (Loughran & Russell, 2002).

This self-study does not examine teacher or teacher educators’ practices in relation to ‘teaching’ but focuses on the professional learning outcomes for teacher educators in relation to the practice of ‘research’ and the professional learning associated with this dimension of my work. Bullough & Pinnegar, (2001) suggest a number of guidelines to improve quality in self-study research. These include that autobiographical self-studies should ring true and enable connection; promote insight and interpretation; be about problems and issues that make someone an educator and that authentic voice is a necessary but not sufficient condition for scholarly standing. In addition, they suggest that quality studies ‘attend carefully to persons in context or setting’ and that they ‘offer fresh perspectives on established truths’ (2001, p.180). What

follows is my attempt to meet these guidelines in telling the story of five research projects that offer a 'phrase-book' for those embarking on similar professional learning journeys.

The context for this self-study

I have crossed geographical borders in the real world to work in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia. In addition within each of these countries I have crossed county or state borders, learning and working within different professional knowledge contexts in each of these situations. Elbaz-Luwisch (2001) identifies the significance of personal experiences of border-crossing in the real world and how they colour the perceptions and expectations of those seeking to enter the territory of the other. As I reflected upon the nature of my own professional learning in various knowledge contexts, I identified several research and professional development projects I had led or been part of which explored the nature and type of professional learning and the conditions that promoted and enhanced professional learning. The following question is therefore addressed in this meta-analysis.

'Does crossing the border between contexts promote and/or enhance teachers and teacher educators' professional learning?

The metaphor of border crossing is linked to other metaphors associated with travelling in the real world in order to explore the idea of the professional learning journey. For example, educators carry a passport denoting their identity which is conceptualized here as their 'professionalism' – being a teacher educator. Evans (2002) defined this as

An ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually-, and epistemologically-based stance, on the part of the individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice (2002, p. 6-7).

We also need a visa to enter some countries and this metaphor is used to denote the purpose of the travel and thus the legitimacy with which the individual can travel in the other 'country' as part of a professional learning journey. We can also consider 'personal practical knowledge' as the 'luggage' carried on the journey. The border can be more or less open indicating the degree of gate-keeping that must be negotiated to enter the other professional knowledge context.

During my professional life I have regularly crossed the borders between working and learning in schools, colleges and universities. I travelled under passports that include those of classroom teacher, researcher, college lecturer, university academic, policy adviser with visas for research on myself and others, university and school teaching, professional development, educational consultancy, as a supporter of teacher research, school experience supervisor, critical friend. My profession is as a teacher educator. My luggage is extensive with expertise relevant to each of these purposes, as well as experience of multiple places of work and learning. The ease of crossing into the 'other' territory has varied and gate-keepers may choose to facilitate this or to create barriers. The following meta-analysis examines the outcomes of a number of research studies with reference to border crossing and using the concept of border pedagogy that involves:

... challenging, re-mapping, and renegotiating those boundaries of knowledge that claim the status of master narratives, fixed identities, and an objective representation of reality ... (and) recognizing the situated nature of knowledge, ... and the shifting, multiple and often contradictory nature of identity (Giroux 1992).

One element of the agenda for border pedagogy identified by Giroux is the need for 'pedagogical conditions in which students become border-crossers in order to understand otherness in its own terms' (Giroux, 1992). What actually counts as a border that might be crossed is far from clear. In the context of professional learning journeys it would seem there is much potential for teachers and teacher educators on professional learning journeys to have 'encounters with others who define themselves differently (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2001, p. 86). The border is defined here as the space or margin between two 'territories' whose inhabitants define themselves differently. By crossing this border the self 'can participate in dialogue with many voices, a dialogue in which the self can engage in ongoing definition and redefinition' (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2001, p. 86).

Why these five research projects?

For Connelly and Clandinin (1994) the territories are defined by shared stories from within the professional knowledge contexts of the 'academy' and the 'school'. I have chosen to interrogate five research projects that are, on first inspection, characterized by some kind of border crossing and from which learning has taken place within an unfamiliar professional knowledge context. These research projects have investigated teachers' and teacher educators' knowledge construction, changes in practice, as well as collaborations and partnerships between teachers and teacher educators.

The selection of the five research projects was made with regard to several key characteristics. First I have an 'insider' understanding of the practice of the research as I played a significant and reflexive role in documenting elements of my own and others' professional learning in each of these projects. For example, in each case my role included formulating the research questions, carrying out the research, analyzing and interpreting the data, writing and reporting the outcomes, either individually or working collaboratively. Finally, each of the projects used similar research methodologies, being based within the qualitative paradigm, was practice-based and focused on teachers' and/or teacher educators' professional learning. Each involved participants crossing a border between two professional knowledge contexts. One of these was broadly the context for practice and the other a context of learning through research so that the border-crossing narrative is one that reflects the challenge of defining one's identity in terms of being a 'learner/researcher' and/or 'worker/practitioner' whilst spanning different professional knowledge (and learning) contexts.

The first project explored the potential existence of a reciprocal learning relationship where teacher educators learn from teachers. This was an attempt to challenge the taken-for-granted relationship embedded in the descriptive language of the role, that is, as *teacher educators*, it is expected that teachers learn from teacher educators not vice versa (Jasman, Payne & Grundy 1999). This project explored what teacher educators learnt from and with teachers and the interactions and relationships between teachers and teacher educators that facilitated knowledge construction. The teacher educators crossed the border between learning in the university through their research and teaching activities and learning through, with and from teachers in a school context.

The second project involved the evaluation of two components in a full-time B.Ed In-service degree in relation to changes in teachers' knowledge, understandings and practices: first, the study of assessment and evaluation within a College of Education, and second, an associated school-based work placement (Jasman, 1987). Here the teachers crossed the border between their usual workplace to again become a 'student' teacher within a College of Education before crossing back to the school context to undertake a professional experience

placement. Here the borders are between the college and two different schools, one familiar and one unfamiliar.

The third project arose from the 'Teacher Career Path project' (Jasman, 1999). This was a project designed to develop and implement a career progression model for classroom teachers employed by the Education Department of Western Australia based on assessing teacher professional expertise. The aim of the Level 3 promotional position was to enhance student outcomes through the retention of competent, experienced teachers in duties directly related to the improving the practice of teaching and learning within a school. These highly accomplished teachers were expected to cross the border between the classroom where they worked in isolation, to engage with peers (and others), in the school and in the community. A follow up study of the work of these teachers (Level 3 Classroom Teachers) was conducted one year after their appointment. In this research project the outcomes for teachers crossing the borders between the classroom, school and wider communities were detailed (Jasman, 2002).

The fourth research project drew upon the work of the Key School Network at the University of Melbourne. In this research, the first eighteen months of the Network's existence was reviewed to explore the extent and qualities of the partnerships and the relative success of the Network in achieving its stated purposes. The Faculty Liaison Staff here were expected to cross the border between their traditional supervisory role within the school setting to a new extended liaison role (Jasman, Cooper & Klemm 2001).

The fifth project arose from the involvement of teacher educators in the project 'Innovative Links between Universities and Schools for Teacher Professional Development'. This project involved a consortium of 14 Australian universities working with over 100 schools (government and non-government) across all States and the Northern Territory. It used the concept of Roundtables, whereby teachers engaged in school-based projects in conjunction with an 'academic associate' from a university partner. In this project, teacher educators moved from being researchers of teachers' practice to supporting teachers' own research designed to achieve teacher-determined school and professional development agendas. The border crossed here was in terms of the ownership and control of the project, as the teacher educator worked within the school to support the teachers, rather than pursuing their own agendas (Grundy et al., 1999). The outcomes of these projects are now presented as they constitute the 'data' for this meta-analysis.

Project 1: Teacher educators border crossing to learn from teachers

The first, Australian Research Council funded, research project investigated teacher educators' construction of knowledge for teacher education. In this project, teacher educators involved in partnerships between schools and universities were 'characterized as living somewhere in the borderlands, at the margins, as boundary spanners or as translators between theory and practice' (Jasman, 1999, p. 20). The research was based on interview data generated by teacher-educators and teachers in a collaborative and self-reflective inquiry. The interview was in three parts in which participants were asked to:

- think and talk in general terms about the learning relationship between teachers and teacher educators,
- describe and reflect upon specific interactions we had had either as a teacher educator with teachers or as a teacher with teacher educators with reference to learning experiences for teacher educators, and
- reflect more generally upon the potential for learning by teacher educators from teachers.

Both the teacher educators and the collaborating teachers described the knowledge 'learnt' as being about the 'real' work of the teacher in the classroom with its focus on the practical. They were learning about the 'realities' of implementing new initiatives to both inform their own teaching practices and to help student teachers develop their expertise. As noted in Jasman et al.,

This renewal of experience is valuable for the opportunity for 'practice to inform theory' (teacher educator Emily 38), to explore 'whether the theories we've been using need to be revised or rethought' (teacher educator Emily 44) and 'affects student-teacher learning through modified programme/unit design and content' (teacher educator Sally, 77-9). The knowledge construction that teacher educators do through their interaction and relationships with teachers is ably described by one teacher educator as '(seeing) through the eyes of the school-based educator' (teacher educator Sally, 78). (1999, p. 25)

This positioning of teacher educators to learn from teachers appears to be mediated initially through their shared experience as classroom teachers – a common understanding of the professional knowledge context. In other words, a previous 'citizenship' or 'residency' in the teachers' territory eases the teacher educators' entry into the world of the other. Such 'shared' experience is not always seen as unproblematic and is, in some cases, seen as an impediment to teacher educators learning from teachers as noted by one teacher educator.

... teacher educators have been successful practitioners themselves and are still successful practitioners in relation to their own teaching on campus ... Unless they did actually understand and have a lot of knowledge about practice and about education and schooling and all sorts of dimensions then they wouldn't be successful teacher educators. But that then may become in some sense an impediment to us learning more (teacher educator Carolyn, 245-257) (Jasman et al., 1999, p. 27).

Here it is not the teacher educator's personal practical knowledge that is informed by access to the school-based teacher's territory but their understanding of the teachers' professional knowledge context. It is a critical part of the knowledge they need to travel and translate between the worlds of the school and practitioner, and the world of the university. This contextual knowledge appears to be a critical feature of the borderland between theory and practice. ... Much of the data reveals the knowledge that teacher educators construct from and with teachers is framed by the concerns of both parties to bridge the divide between theory and practice – between the university and the school (Jasman et al., 1999, p. 28-9).

However, even though there is evidence of a reciprocal learning relationship here, whether there is a border and the nature of its distinguishing features is still unclear. It seems more likely that teacher educators are *tourists* in the territory of the teacher. Their passport is their identity as teacher educator and they travel under visas where their purpose is clear and they are undertaking a familiar role. They observe and learn about the other's professional knowledge context through visiting schools and talking with teachers. This then translates into change in their personal practical knowledge to be enacted within their own professional knowledge context.

Project 2: Teacher educators border-crossing and working in unfamiliar ways

As Bullough et al. (1997) note the educational aims of partnerships such as the Key School Network provide:

... exemplary education for pre-service teachers, support continuing professional development of experienced teachers, and involve schools and universities in collaborative research (p. 85).

At the University of Melbourne a Memorandum of Agreement was drawn up between Key Schools and the University designed to:

- enhance the school placement experience for both students and the Key School
- result in innovative programs for students
- establish worthwhile professional development programs for teachers in Key Schools
- provide the Key School with the public recognition of being associated with the University and
- develop a relationship in research beneficial to both the Key School and the University.

The study described here sought to identify the extent to which the principles outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding were achieved within the first 18 months of operation of the Key School Network. In one element of the research academics that were identified as Faculty liaison were asked to indicate the benefits of the partnership for teacher education students and the schools. The remaining questions focused on the effectiveness of the role of the Faculty liaison person, constraints, strengths and suggested improvements.

One of the features of the Key School Network was that all tenured Faculty should be allocated at least one and if necessary up to three Key Schools. In this way it was hoped to enhance the status and value of developing and enhancing the school-university partnership. However, in practice this responsibility was not always given the time and attention expected within the Memorandum of Understanding. Those who were committed to such partnerships often took on additional schools which may have led to a reduction in their effectiveness within each school. In other cases casual or temporary contract staff went to the schools in place of tenured Faculty.

Faculty liaison staff expressed concerns about the workload, time management and the value placed on this aspect of their work. However, benefits such as access to the 'professional knowledge context of the Key Schools and the capacity to use this knowledge in the planning and delivery of on-campus courses' (Jasman, Cooper & Klemm 2001) were noted by a few respondents as with the first research study described here. However, there are some issues arising from each professional knowledge context of the 'school' and the 'academy'.

For example, schools have typically been in a position where the focus of their relationship with the university was the supervision and assessment of school experience with the support of Faculty staff. The extension of the partnership to include other activities such as research and professional development took some time to realize and most schools had not yet taken the initiative to negotiate such activities. This may have been in part due to the lack of match between school and Faculty liaison staff interests and concerns (Jasman, Cooper & Klemm, 2001).

From using the metaphors of passports, visas and luggage and of being travellers crossing more or less open borders, it is clear that there are barriers at the border that impact on the successful implementation of the Key School Network. For example, University of Melbourne academics normally travelled on the visa of school experience supervision. Whilst this was still a part of the Key School Liaison role it was now an extended role and included other dimensions such as school and professional development and collaborative research. In order for this to happen, members of the school professional knowledge context as well as the university academics had to cross the border.

They had to move from a relationship embedded in the professional and practical knowledge associated with school experience supervision, to the new territory of collaboration, partnership and shared agendas where there is a sharing of the stories that characterize the two professional knowledge contexts of school and the academy. The visas that were carried by the liaison person were not clear enough to alert the members of the

school communities that there was a change in purpose and the teacher educators were travelling with dual citizenship carrying two different passports. Thus in the case of the Key School Network a proportion of participants from both the school and the University appeared to be *reluctant travellers*, whilst others were making the slow and arduous journey as if they were *trekkers* through unfamiliar terrain and with inadequate maps to negotiate their way. Border crossing in this instance did not offer much opportunity for professional learning, neither the passport, visa, nor the purpose of travel were understood, and some did not want to engage with the ‘other’ professional knowledge context.

Project 3: Retraining teachers through border-crossing

The B.Ed (Hons) in-service degree was a full-time program to which teachers were seconded on full pay to convert a three to a four year teacher education qualification. The rationale underpinning the program was to promote teacher self-evaluation and classroom-based research. The strand I prepared, delivered and evaluated in this research was one of four that made up Part 1 of the degree program and focused on methods of assessment and evaluation. The investigation of my own and the teachers' professional learning drew on a variety of sources of data including teacher self-reports; contributions within the tutorials, lectures and workshops; line-labelled concept maps; oral and written presentations of pupil case studies; school and course files. This evidence was used to explore the development of teachers' expertise in relation to the theory and practice of assessment. Analysis of the data at the time suggested that two aspects of the teachers' experience prompted them to confront and reflect on their own teaching.

One of these, as suggested earlier, was the opportunity to observe and assess individual pupils. The unexpected result ... was the way in which some teachers when confronted with a different age group or subject emphasis went through a similar process of reappraisal of their teaching. (Jasman, 1987, p. 31)

A major feature of the program was that these experienced teachers completed a placement in a local school for one day a week during the taught course (one year). Thus these experienced teachers crossed the border between the school in which they worked and understood the professional knowledge context, to a different school where they were characterized as ‘learner teachers’ and had no knowledge of the professional knowledge context. During this placement the teachers were expected to identify needs within the school and to investigate these with reference to the theoretical and methodological issues which formed the basis of the college-based course. Thus these teachers were also expected to cross the border between the school and the ‘academy’ as well as between being the classroom teacher to working in a different way within another school during their placement.

In terms of the metaphor of travelling across borders these teachers were *migrants*. The first priority was to acquire the skills necessary for survival in a new territory since they expressed their professional learning “as a need to acquire new knowledge and skills for teaching” (Jasman, 1987, p. 31) rather than developing existing skills. Crossing the border into a new personal practical and/or professional knowledge context – defined as different by virtue of working in a different subject area or with a different age level – was found to promote critical reflection, self-evaluation and professional learning. Here the relevance of the teachers’ personal practical knowledge was called into question first rather than their knowledge of the professional knowledge context.

Another significant theme echoed throughout the evidence collected on the professional learning of these teachers. This was that they could only cope with so much. Teachers in relatively familiar professional knowledge contexts, even though the children and school may have been different, experienced less anxiety about their own teaching abilities,

that is their personal practical knowledge. They were also less threatened by the expectations implicit within the course and school placement, made greater progress towards achieving the aims of the program and became self-evaluative at an earlier stage of the course.

This would suggest that border-crossing for effective professional learning, at least initially, is more likely to happen where the differences between the personal practical and professional knowledge contexts are less pronounced. In this way the personal practical and professional context knowledge that teachers bring to the situation is more likely to match in part their expertise and experiences. In the same way just as migrants face greater challenges where there are larger differences between old and new 'homes' so too do teachers. Similarly if teachers are 'reluctant travellers' then they are likely to resist the learning opportunities that are afforded within a new professional knowledge context. The passport they carry is that of teacher and they need no visa to provide legitimacy within the school classroom but as their purposes are different within the two classroom contexts a visa can help crossing the border.

Project 4: Highly accomplished teachers border-crossing to promote other teachers' learning

Within Western Australia a trial conducted in 1997 resulted in the appointment of approximately 225 teachers to Level 3 promotional positions within their own schools. These positions are similar to the original conception of the Advanced Skills Teacher in Australia. The role was defined around the induction of new teachers, supporting team building among staff and the wider community through informal and formal means, such as through action research and curriculum development. On appointment, these teachers continued to work within their own schools and negotiated their role with the principal or nominee(s). This negotiated role was expected to enable these teachers to continue to demonstrate professional expertise within the classroom, ongoing professional learning and a leadership role within the wider school context. In this way teachers were expected to use their personal practical knowledge by crossing the border between their own personal professional knowledge context (the classroom) and the wider school-based professional knowledge contexts.

Talbert and McLaughlin (1996) noted that 'privacy norms characteristic of the profession undermine the capacity for teacher learning and sustained professional commitment' (p. 127). However, they suggested that conditions for shared professional 'standards' to emerge were apparent where teacher communities promoted collegial discourse and collaboration as required in the Level 3 Classroom Teacher role. Data arising from the survey of the Level 3 Classroom teachers suggested that the wider school professional knowledge context was critical to the teacher's success in negotiating an appropriate role and their ability to successfully use their personal practical knowledge to support their own learning and that of others.

64% of all teachers commented that the support of the principal, deputies, administrative team and/or district office contributed to the successful implementation of the role. Many teachers also noted the importance of the support and collaboration of staff, students and/or parents to the successful implementation of the role (48%). Teachers also commented that their personal commitment, previous standing in the school community and professional expertise also contributed to their success in implementing the role (31%) (Jasman, 2002, p. 63).

What is of interest here is that recognition, support and collaboration within the professional knowledge context was by far the most often cited reason for success in the Level 3 role. This type of context enabled teachers to share their experience with others through the exchange of personal practical knowledge shared within a common professional knowledge context characterized by communication and collaboration. Thus the most common positive outcome

identified by half of the Level 3 Classroom teachers was the opportunity to work with colleagues and share professional expertise. These opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues were seen to improve professional expertise, morale, self esteem and confidence, for both Level 3 Classroom teachers and other teachers within the school and district. Here it seems the level 3 classroom teacher is the *travel agent* or *tour guide* – offering to others opportunities to experience another’s classroom and share in the personal practical knowledge, without having to travel between different professional knowledge contexts.

The Level 3 teachers needed no passport or visa as they worked in the same school territory but they did have to have some form of identification and recognition to legitimate their knowledge claims so that other teachers took their knowledge and skills seriously. They did not have the passport of the teacher educator or the visa of professional development provider. Their status as Level 3 classroom teachers provided formal recognition of their claim to know about teaching and learning and about being able to work with adults (teachers) as well as students in their classes. It also enabled them to cross into the professional knowledge contexts of the teacher educator, even though they were still physically located within the school.

Project 5: Teacher educators and teachers border-crossing to learn together

In this research six ‘academic associates’ and two teachers from the Murdoch University Roundtable formed a collaborative research group to investigate issues arising from their work in the ‘Innovative Links between Schools and Universities’ project (Grundy et al. 1999). Innovative Links emphasizes collaborative, team and partnership approaches. Sachs (1997) argues that this type of project provides the opportunity to increase the involvement of the classroom teacher in determining the agenda for improving teacher quality and professionalism, working collaboratively in partnerships to create learning communities. Using such strategies enables and enhances the professional learning of teachers as well as, as is argued here, impacting on the understandings of teacher educators with respect to their own and other professional knowledge contexts and personal practical knowledge.

The research was collaborative and self-reflective and conducted by teacher educators studying their own work as ‘academic associates’. It was an example of university academics engaging in practitioner research where the practice under investigation was their own. A small-scale study of partnership formation and development was conducted through an exploration by two teachers in the research group and by the teacher educators of their own work as academic associates (Grundy et al., 1999).

The study explored what we brought to our work with, in and for schools as academic associates and the changes in our expectations and assumptions about the work which occurred as the partnership between ourselves as university academics in teacher education and teachers in schools developed (Grundy et al., 1999, p. 40).

During the data analysis phase we became aware that we shared certain elements of professional history. For example, we were all women working in teacher education but, more importantly for our work in border-crossing, we all had been classroom teachers and therefore part of the teachers’ territory.

We perceived this to be of particular significance in establishing our ‘credentials’ when we made contact with teachers in schools - it was our passport to entry into this emerging landscape – a shared set of stories arising from experience of similar professional knowledge contexts (Grundy et al., 1999, p. 40).

As a group of teacher educators we shared certain experiences other than teaching, for example, in teacher education, school experience supervision, curriculum and professional development that provided different knowledge, abilities and skills from those of the classroom teacher. We also shared certain values such as a commitment 'to working with, in and for the profession and community where the goals of the project are shared, (and) there is mutual exchange of expertise and parity of esteem among partners' (Grundy et al, 1999, p. 46).

Thus we shared 'personal practical knowledge' in the knowledge, abilities and skills we could use as academic associates and a 'common professional knowledge context' in our shared values and commitment to working in partnership with teachers. Our personal practical knowledge was important in establishing our legitimacy although the visa we carried of 'academic associate' was unfamiliar to the teachers. How then did we find the 'emerging landscape' of Innovative Links within the school? As noted in Grundy et al (1999) the metaphor of professional knowledge landscapes and/or contexts proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (1996) was particularly relevant to our understandings of our journey. As academic associates we all knew we were going somewhere 'else', and we had some sense of what it would be like based on our histories, but we were not quite sure what it would really be like. Moreover, we were willing participants in this journey. Responses of teachers to our 'trek' into and exploration of their professional knowledge context gave rise to wariness, based on 'assumptions about the roles of university academics in schools - both as researchers and as professional developers - which are pervasive in the field of education' (Grundy et al., 1999, p. 49).

Our visas as 'academic associates' were not valid in the eyes of the teachers. In order to enhance our legitimacy in this different role we waited at the border. 'Holding back was a strategy used by all of the academic associates to enable teachers to set the direction of the project, own it and to provide the space for individuals to determine when and in what ways they might be involved in The Innovative Links Project. It enabled teachers and academic associates to negotiate at the border to overcome the wariness expressed by schools in their involvement with universities and concerns that the university would impose its agenda for the research on the school' (Grundy et al., 1999, p. 53).

Having waited at the border we were eventually allowed to enter the other territory and, to extend the metaphor, we travelled on a temporary visa. As Grundy et al (1999) describe, it took time to establish that we were carrying legitimate and valid visas. 'Our credibility and legitimacy after our initial entry to the school were largely achieved through the particular abilities we demonstrated through the work we did with, in and for schools' (p. 53).

On our travels through this new territory of The Innovative Links Project we realized that this was a new professional knowledge context for both schools and universities, for teachers and teacher educators. Both teachers and teacher educators were required to cross borders, carrying different passports and visas from before. This has, however, enabled professional learning to occur, since 'we are now aware that the new terrain has necessitated the creation of new maps, or changed practices' (Grundy et al., 1999, p. 53). Whilst the border-crossing and nature of teachers' professional learning is not explored here, Hogan and Strickland (1998) have provided stories of this work from the teachers' perspectives.

So what kind of travellers were we in the Innovative Links project? This is perhaps the most problematic case for the metaphor used in previous examples. Perhaps this project did actually create a borderland at the margins where members of school and university knowledge contexts could travel and learn together. Thus academic associates might be seen as *explorers* in a new territory; working as *cartographers* as they chart their professional learning journeys and create new maps to help others travelling through similar terrain.

Discussion and conclusions

In this meta-analysis of five research studies the metaphors of the professional learning journey, border-crossing, passports and visas into new personal practical and professional knowledge contexts are explored. The questions of what and how border-crossings shape the knowledge of teachers and teacher educators, and thus create new professional learning are also addressed. In addition, it is suggested that metaphors such as tourist, migrant, tour guide, trekker, explorer and cartographer can provide a useful framework to understand the way the traveller – and residents of the territory that is being visited – might view the purpose of the professional learning journey. Similarly the luggage that is carried is discussed. The role of border pedagogy for lifelong learning in education is then used to explore how such activities may promote and enhance (or not) professional learning journeys of teachers and teacher educators, and how the teacher educator in particular can plan for professional learning journeys.

There are different borders that are crossed, for example, between schools with different stories, between schools and universities and vice versa. Not only are there different borders to cross but the type of visa under which we travel in the other territory is an important factor in the ease of access, familiarity with, understanding of and comfort within the other territory. Thus the way in which the border-crosser journeys within the new territory impacts on the ease with which the new knowledge context can be 'known' and 'learnt'. As with border-crossing there are rites of passage and gate-keepers may subvert or ease the passage from one professional knowledge context to another.

In the case of teacher educators and teachers in the first case, the degree of familiarity eased the border-crossing. Both had been *resident* in the 'other' territory and were familiar with the culture, language and life within this professional knowledge context. With the Level 3 Classroom teachers, their promotion provided a visa that clearly identified the capacity to work in different ways within the same professional knowledge context. They could be the host opening the border for others to cross into their territory. They were the travel agents and tour guides enabling others to become border-crossers.

The nature of the professional knowledge contexts and the situated knowledge of the people who work within them are largely taken-for-granted in our professional working lives. The notion of 'interruption' as explored by Grundy et al. (2001) is one way in which different ways of working can impact on the professional knowledge context of the 'other'. This is well illustrated by the example of the Key School Network where the 'academy' is attempting to interrupt the understanding in the school of the academy. However, with the Key School Network the border-crossers were not familiar with the new visas nor were the teachers aware that these teacher educators were travelling under a different passport. In this situation the opportunities for professional learning were limited.

The conditions for professional learning journeys to be effective require the traveller to be adequately identified by carrying the right passport and a visa providing a clear indication of the purpose of and legitimacy to travel. The lesson here is perhaps to wait at the border and 'hold back' until the papers are checked so that new relationships are formed as a result of the interruption. For example, by holding back in the Innovative Links project, the academic associates enabled the school to interrogate their identity, purpose and legitimacy through consideration of their documentation (passports and visas). This period helped prepare the school for the new relationships envisaged in the Innovative Links project. Temporary visas enabled the academic associates and teachers to explore this new territory and both engaged in professional learning.

In conclusion, the use of metaphors for people who travel through space is explored here to try to illustrate the features of a professional learning journey. During a lifetime of travelling through professional knowledge contexts; professional learning through the acquisition of personal practical knowledge is shaped by the professional knowledge context and access to different personal practical knowledge contexts. Professional learning, as can be seen in the following summary, can also be shaped by the way in which the traveller engages in the journey. Thus there is the

- *Tourist* – as in the case of the teacher educators where they visit, observe, enjoy and learn from being in a different place. They have a vested interest in appreciating the differences between their own knowledge context and that of the other. They learn within the existing culture but are not primarily there to try to change it.
- *Migrant* – as in the case of the teachers pursuing further study where the emphasis is on developing new skills and/or personal practical knowledge to use in this different situation and for different purposes the learning takes place by being positioned in a new professional knowledge context.
- *Reluctant travellers* – as in the case of academics or teachers who are required to travel away from their familiar territories, and who resist making the journey and seem unable to appreciate the destination. They do not understand the language and culture and see no value in learning about it.
- *Travel agent or tour guide* – as in the case of the Level 3 Classroom teachers who open their doors to others or arrange for learning journeys in their own territories so that others can become border-crossers and engage in professional learning through understanding of another's personal practical knowledge or professional knowledge context.
- *Trekkers* – as in the case of teacher educators or teachers who are doing the journey the hard way, finding it slow and arduous through unfamiliar terrain and with inadequate maps to negotiate their way.
- *Explorers/cartographers* – as in the case of the academic associates in the Innovative Links project. They journey into unfamiliar territory and begin to chart their travels; they record the nature of their professional learning, identifying what they brought with them and the changes in practices that are coming from making the journey.

The way in which the traveller approaches the new territory and their experiences of border-crossing both geographically and between professional knowledge contexts impacts on the nature and quality of the learning that arises. The nature of the professional learning and knowledge construction is therefore influenced by a number of dimensions. From these studies it seems the most significant barriers arise when there is little similarity between the territories or professional knowledge contexts; where the identity shown in the passport is unfamiliar or not recognized, the visa does not make clear the purpose nor is the legitimacy of the traveller understood by those who gate-keep at the border; and finally, where the luggage that is carried by the traveller is not appropriate for the new professional knowledge context.

There are always limitations in the use of metaphors. However, in this exploration of border-crossing for professional learning the metaphors have included types of traveller, the passports and visas they travel under, their luggage and the territories through which they travel. This analysis captures in part the role of border-crossing between different professional knowledge contexts in enabling professional learning journeys. However, it also highlights the importance of the degree of difference between personal practical knowledge and/or professional knowledge contexts for learning to occur. Thus if we are to learn about the working lives of the other (and ourselves), it is necessary to cross the border between the

‘academy’ and the ‘school’ and in doing so share in the others’ ‘institutional stories, myths, rituals and symbols’ (Grundy, 2001, p. 205). The learning that has been described here has resulted from such opportunities to cross borders.

Author’s Biography

Anne Jasman is a teacher educator and policy adviser. She conducted research and professional development projects on appraisal, partnership, collaborative working professional expertise, learning and development, and contributed to policy development and implementation for CPD, leadership and professional teaching standards in the UK and Australia. She was recently appointed Reader at the University of Hertfordshire following five years as a Senior Policy Adviser for the General Teaching Council for England. She worked at Murdoch, Sydney and Melbourne Universities and completed a research fellowship for the Australian Commonwealth Government on the nature, development, enhancement and assessment of teacher professional expertise.

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